

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



Cora Campbell, Commissioner
Jeff Regnart, Director



Contact:
Jeff Estensen, Area Management Biologist
Dayna Green, Asst. Area Management Biologist
Phone: (907) 949-1320
Fax: (907) 949-1830

Lower Yukon Area Office
P.O. Box 127
Emmonak, Alaska 99581
Date Issued: 8/27/12
Time: 4:00 p.m.

2012 Yukon River Fall Salmon Fishery News Release # 37

Fall Update # 6, Yukon Area Salmon Fishery

Districts Affected: Yukon Area

Fall Season Assessment

The cumulative fall chum salmon total run size through August 26, based on run reconstruction, is approximately 903,700 fish. This is above the historical median of 534,900 fish for that date. The drift test fishery projects at Emmonak and Mountain Village corroborate the timing and relative passage strength estimated by the Pilot Station sonar project. The projected 2012 fall chum salmon run size is ranging between 900,000 and 1 million fish, based on early to median run timing.

The first pulse of fall chum salmon entered the lower Yukon River on July 17 and was estimated to be 122,000 fish in size. Three additional pulses entered the lower Yukon River on July 25, July 31, and August 4 and were estimated to be 142,000, 35,500, and 43,000 fish in size. The fifth and largest pulse this season entered the river on August 16 and was estimated to be 212,000 fish in size.

Coho salmon passage peaked between August 19 and 23 and was estimated to be 65,000 fish in those five days. The cumulative passage by the Pilot Station sonar project through August 26, based on run reconstruction, is approximately 114,800 fish, which is below the historical median of 126,800 fish for that date.

Lower Yukon River Cooperative Drift Test Fishing – YDFDA, ADF&G

The cumulative CPUE for fall chum salmon through August 26 was 1,839, which is above the historical median of 1,114 for that date. The cumulative CPUE through August 26 for coho salmon was 253, which is below the historical median of 371 for that date.

ADF&G will cease conducting test fish drifts after August 28. YDFDA will continue the project from August 29 through September 15.

Mountain Village Drift Test Fishing - Asacarsarmiut Traditional Council and BSFA

The cumulative CPUE for fall chum salmon through August 26 was 1,054, which is below the historical median of 1,688 for that date. The cumulative CPUE for coho salmon through August 26 is 379, which is below the historical median of 756 for that date.

Pilot Station Sonar Project - ADF&G

The cumulative fall chum salmon passage through August 26 is approximately 644,000 fish, which is above the median passage of 468,600 fish for that date. The cumulative coho salmon passage through August 26 is approximately 71,300 fish, which is below the median passage of 101,600 fish for that date.

Rapids Test Fish Wheel Project - Zuray

The cumulative fall chum salmon CPUE through August 26 is approximately 10,400 fish, which is slightly below the historical median of 12,000 fish for that date. The cumulative CPUE based on the adjusted water level is slightly above the historical median for that date.

Chandalar Sonar Project - USFWS

The cumulative fall chum salmon passage through August 26 is approximately 30,500 fish, which is above the average passage of 17,500 fish for that date.

Sheenjek Sonar Project - ADF&G

The cumulative fall chum salmon passage through August 26 is approximately 6,500 fish, which is above the average passage of 5,800 fish for that date.

Tanana Test Fish Wheel Project - Moore

The cumulative fall chum salmon passage through August 22 is approximately 4,100 fish, which is above the average of 369 fish for that date. The cumulative coho salmon passage through August 22 is 64 fish, which is above the average of 8 fish for that date. The test fish wheel has not been in operation because of developing mud flows at the site which should clear out shortly and counts will resume.

Eagle Sonar Project - ADF&G & DFO

The preliminary transition date between Chinook to fall chum salmon runs was August 23. The cumulative fall chum salmon passage through August 26 is 556 fish, which is below the average passage for that date.

Stock Identification

Fall chum salmon genetic samples processed from August 11 through August 22 (pulse 5) passage past Pilot Station sonar indicate that stocks represent approximately 42%, 32%, and 25% for Tanana, Border/US (Chandalar/Sheenjek), and Mainstem Canada respectively. These proportions are above average for Tanana and Border/US and slightly below average for Mainstem Canada based on the 2004-2011 dataset.

Age Composition

The fall chum salmon age composition from the 6" LYTF drift nets through August 27 was 0.8% age-3, 77.5% age-4, 18.6% age-5, and 3.0% age-6 fish. The average age-4 fish is 66.2% for this date and average age-5 fish 31.6%. The sample size was 1,050 fish for ages and 1,067 for gender. Females contributed 54.8% to the samples, which is below the average of 57.8%.

The combined fall chum salmon age composition from commercial harvest periods in District 1 (through August 23) was 80.2% age-4, 17.4% age-5, and 1.8% age-6 fish. The sample size was 873 fish for ages and 879 for gender. The proportion of females in the commercial catch samples was 54.7%.

Fall Season Management

In accordance with the Yukon River Drainage Fall Chum Salmon Management Plan, a total run ranging from 900,000 to 1 million fish is adequate for escapement needs, full subsistence opportunity, and has a surplus available for other uses. Subsistence fishing is open 7 days per week in all mainstem districts (Districts 1-5).

Fall Commercial Salmon Fishing

Through August 27, twelve fall commercial fishing periods have been announced in District Y-1, nine periods in District Y-2, four periods in Subdistrict 4-A, and three period in Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C. Additional commercial fishing periods will be dependent upon inseason run strength assessment and market interest.

Preliminary harvest information for District Y-1:

Period #10: District Y-1 Set Net Only Area, 12 hours (10:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m. August 20), remainder of District Y-1, 9 hours (1:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. August 20).
8,309 fall chum/56,134 lbs. (\$0.75/lb.), 8,407 coho/52,875 lbs. (\$1.25/lb.), Incidental harvest (not sold): 0 Chinook salmon.

Period #11: District Y-1 Set Net Only Area, 12 hours (9:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. August 23), remainder of District Y-1, 9 hours (12:00 noon until 9:00 p.m. August 23).
4,571 fall chum/30,472 lbs. (\$0.75/lb.), 4,489 coho/29,067 lbs. (\$1.25/lb.), Incidental harvest (not sold): 0 Chinook salmon.

Period #12: District Y-1 Set Net Only Area, 12 hours (10:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m. August 27), remainder of District Y-1, 9 hours (1:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. August 27).
No harvest information available.

The cumulative harvest for Y-1 through August 23 is 130,491 fall chum and 32,435 coho salmon, and the incidental harvest (not sold) of Chinook salmon is 71 fish.

Preliminary harvest information for District Y-2:

Period #8: District Y-2, 9 hours (12:00 noon until 9:00 p.m. August 19).
9,242 fall chum/62,273 lbs. (\$0.75/lb.), 7,596 coho/46,253 lbs. (\$1.25/lb.), Incidental harvest (not sold): 0 Chinook salmon.

Period #9: District Y-2, 9 hours (9:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. August 26)
3,075 fall chum/20,616 lbs. (\$0.75/lb.), 2,995 coho/18,481 lbs. (\$1.25/lb.), incidental harvest (not sold): 0 Chinook salmon.

The cumulative harvest for Y-2 through August 26 is 122,906 fall chum and 23,404 coho salmon, and the incidental harvest (not sold) of Chinook salmon is 34 fish.

Preliminary harvest information for Subdistrict 4-A:

Period #3: Subdistrict 4-A, 120 hours (6:00 p.m. August 21 until 6:00 p.m. August 26).
0 fall chum, 0 coho, incidental harvest (not sold): 0 Chinook salmon.

The cumulative Subdistrict 4-A commercial harvest through August 26 remains 271 fall chum salmon and the incidental harvest (not sold): 0 Chinook salmon.

Preliminary harvest information for Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C:

Period #2: Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C, 120 hours (6:00 p.m. August 21 until 6:00 p.m. August 26).
0 fall chum, 0 coho, incidental harvest (not sold): 0 Chinook salmon.

The cumulative commercial harvest for Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C through August 26 remains 1,484 fall chum salmon, and the incidental harvest (not sold) of Chinook salmon is 0.

Subsistence Salmon Fishing

Coastal District: Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller.

Districts 1, 2, 3: Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day except for 12 hours before, during, and 12 hours after each commercial fishing period. Fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller during open subsistence salmon fishing periods.

The Innoko River: Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller.

Subdistrict 4: Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller. Use of drift gillnets to harvest fall chum salmon is allowed in that portion of Subdistrict 4-A from Stink Creek upstream to Cone Point during open subsistence fishing periods.

Koyukuk River: Subsistence salmon fishing in the Koyukuk River is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller.

Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C: Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller.

Subdistrict 5-D: Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day and

fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller.

Subdistricts 6-A and 6-B (from the mouth of the Tanana River upstream to the downstream mouth of Wood River): This area includes the communities of Manley, Minto, and Nenana. Subsistence salmon fishing is open for two 42-hour periods per week from 6:00 p.m. Fridays until 12:00 noon Sundays and from 6:00 p.m. Mondays until 12:00 noon Wednesdays. In the Old Minto Area, subsistence fishing for salmon is open for one 5 day fishing period per week from 6:00 p.m. Fridays until 6:00 p.m. Wednesdays.

Subdistricts 6-C (from the mouth of the Wood River upstream to the downstream mouth of the Salcha River): This area includes the communities of Fairbanks, North Pole, and Salcha. Personal use salmon fishing is open for two 42-hour periods per week from 6:00 p.m. Fridays until 12:00 noon Sundays and from 6:00 p.m. Mondays until 12:00 noon Wednesdays.

During subsistence salmon fishing closures, fish wheels may not be operated and gillnets with a mesh size greater than four inches and a length greater than 60 feet must be removed from the water.

Recorded fishery announcements and updates are available 24 hours a day at (907) 949-1731 or 1-866-479-7387. If you have any questions regarding this report, please call the Emmonak ADF&G office at (907) 949-1320 or the Fairbanks ADF&G office at (907) 459-7274. The Emmonak ADF&G office will stand by on VHF channel 7A.

This has been an announcement by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

-end-